

of great importance *in* my life, and which, if I had chosen, might have made a great difference in my destiny. On Tuesday, the 28th of December, I dined with my old friend, M. Pierlot, and on leaving home I was in the habit of saying where I might be found in case I should be wanted. At nine o'clock at night an express arrived from the Minister of Police desiring me to come immediately to his office. I confess, considering the circumstances of the times, and knowing the Emperor's prejudices against me, such a request coming at such an hour made me feel some uneasiness, and I expected nothing less than a journey to Vincennes. The Due de Eo-vigo, by becoming responsible for me, had as yet warded off the blow, and the supervision to which the Emperor had subjected me—thanks to the *good* offices of Davoust—consisted in going three times a week to show myself to Savary.

I accordingly, having first borrowed a night-cap, repaired to the hotel of the Minister of Police. I was ushered into a well-lighted room, and when I entered I found Savary waiting for me. He was in full costume, from which I concluded he had just come from the Emperor. Advancing towards me with an air which showed he had no bad news to communicate, he thus addressed me: "Bourrienne, I have just come from the Emperor, who asked me where you were? I told him you were in Paris, and that I saw you often. 'Well/' continued the Emperor, 'bid him come to me, I want to employ him. It is three years since he has had anything to do. I wish to send him as Minister to Switzerland, but he must set off directly. He must go to the Allies. He understands German well. The King of Prussia expressed by letter • satisfaction at his conduct towards the Prussians whom the war forced to retire to Hamburg. He knows Prince Wittgenstein, who is the friend of the King of Prussia, and probably

it remains for success to justify what you have done. As one of the Allied Monarchs I have nothing more to say to you, but as a man I declare to you that you have grieved me in a way that you can never repair." The step was of course only justifiable on the then belief that all and anything was fair against Napoleon, yet, with a nearer approach to the feelings of his Allies, Alexander ended by asking as a favor that his Guard should be the first to cross the bridge at Bale. See the whole story in *Metiernich*, vol.i. pp. 216-223.